

## **Levin Pistol Club (LPC) Probationary Members Training**

This document contains three competence stages to meet the requirements to obtain full membership of the LPC. The successful completion of the requirements to become a full member will take a **minimum** of 6 months from the day your probationary membership has been approved. You are required by law to achieve full membership of the LPC (you need to complete an application form for this, which is available on our website) prior to obtaining your range officers certificate and your FAL B endorsement.

### **PNZ Shooting Protocols, tips and definitions for International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)**

Adapted from the PNZ members handbook shooting tips for all disciplines and basic pistol shooting skills, reference and ongoing guide for club training officers.

### **Basic Pistol Shooting Skills Beginner Stage One**

#### **Training Objectives:**

At the completion of Stage One the trainee will be able to demonstrate

1. Understanding of the LPC Inc. Indoor Range Standing Orders.
2. Safe pistol handling skills.
3. The ability to shoot a series of shots, following the trainer's instructions and range rules.

#### **The theory will cover:**

1. Range attendance signing in procedures.
2. Safe pistol handling habits and protocols.
3. The use of a clear chamber flag.
4. How a pistol works – the main components (revolver and semi-auto).
5. How to load and unload. (Using .22 snap caps).
6. Management of pistol or revolver malfunctions.
7. LPC Inc. Indoor Range Standing orders.
8. The Safety Zone – location, purpose and strict rules that apply.
9. Range Officer Commands and the required responses. (Appendix 1).
10. Key points to accurate shooting. (Appendix 2).
11. Dry fire practice using .22 snap caps.

#### **Live Fire Exercise:**

1. Using a club .22 pistol or revolver trainees receive instruction on double grip (action style Shooting style) shot placement.
2. Using a club .22 pistol or revolver trainees receive instruction on single shot placement on a target using the strong hand only grip (ISSF style)

**Instruction to cover:**

1. Safe muzzle direction keeping within the range cone of fire.
2. How to Load and Make Ready – How to Unload and Show Clear.
3. Stance - posture - grip - sight picture - trigger release - follow through.
4. Single shot on a target.
5. Series of shots on a target.

**Assessment – demonstrate the following:**

1. Safe pistol handling skills.
2. Ability to shoot a series of shots, following all instructions and range rules.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed Stage One of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to Stage Two of basic training.

**Date:** ...../...../.....

**Members Name:**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

**Club Trainers Name**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

## **Basic Pistol Shooting Skills Beginner Stage Two**

### **Training Objectives:**

At the completion of Stage Two the trainee will be able to demonstrate:

1. Safe pistol handling skills.
2. The ability to fire a shot or series of shots with reasonable accuracy.
3. The ability to follow the trainer's instructions.

### **The theory will cover:**

1. Safety zone - clear pistol for transfer to means of carry.
2. Loading magazines – how and where.
3. Review all Range Officer commands and the required responses.
4. Ensure that appropriate ear and eye protection is in use.
5. Understand and be able to demonstrate the "Pistol Ready Position".
6. Review – Stance, body posture, grip, sight picture and trigger control.
7. Re-Loading procedures.

### **Live Fire Exercise 25 meters No time restrictions:**

1. Free style in your own time, single shot on target - repeat three times from Pistol Ready Position.
2. Free style in your own time, two shots on target - repeat three times from Pistol Ready Position.
3. Strong hand only in your own me, two shots on target - repeat three times from pistol ready position.
4. Free style in your own time, two shots on target followed by a re-load and a further two shots.

**Assessment – demonstrate the following:**

1. Safe pistol handling skills.
2. The ability to fire a shot or series of shots with reasonable accuracy.
3. The ability to follow the trainer’s instructions
4. I confirm that the probationary member has completed stage Two of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to Stage Three of basic training.

**Date:** ...../...../.....

**Members Name:**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

**Club Trainers Name**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

## **Basic Pistol Shooting Skills Beginner Stage Three**

### **Training Objectives:**

At the completion of Stage Three the trainee will be able to demonstrate:

Safety to advance to shooting under the supervision of an allocated LPC member with a "B" endorsement to complete their minimum of 6 months probationary period.

### **The theory will cover:**

1. On range transportation / carry of unloaded handguns.
2. Strong hand, weak hand pistol transition.

### **Dry Fire Drills:**

1. Free style - strong hand, weak hand grip, stance and posture.
2. Transition of pistol between strong hand and weak hand.
3. Load and make ready. Pistol Ready Position.
4. Shooter ready, stand by - simulated dry fire down range.
5. If finished unload and show clear.

### **Live Fire Exercise:**

#### **(Shooter and Range Officer - Role Playing Exercise)**

1. The range is open
2. You may load 5 rounds and make ready
3. Are you ready,....fire
4. You may load 5 rounds for your next series
6. Are you ready,....fire
7. Cease fire and unload, Shooters step back from the line
8. The range is closed, you may wind back and patch

**Assessment: Trainer will select a Stage One Live Firing Exercise.**

I confirm that the probationary member has completed Stage Three of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is safe to advance to shooting under the supervision of an allocated LPC member with a "B" endorsement to complete their minimum of 6 months probationary period.

**Date:** ...../...../.....

**Members Name:**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

**Club Trainers Name**.....

**NZPA number:**.....

**Signature** .....

**Appendix 1**

**Please note:** The LPC club pistols can only be handed out and returned to their locked receptacle by the armourer, the range officer or the training officer.

**LPC Inc. Range Commands**

**1. The range is open**

**Shooter's Action:** Remove your pistol from it's receptacle, place it on the shooting bench with the barrel down range, chamber open. Clear chamber flag inserted and empty magazine against the pistol with the loading side up. (Revolvers with cylinders open. **Please note:** Ensure you use a device to keep the pistol's chamber open for pistols that cannot be latched).

Ammunition can be opened and placed on the shooting bench.

**2. You may load 5 rounds and make ready**

**Shooter's actions:** Put on eyes and ears protection. Remove your clear chamber flag. Load your magazine, chamber or cylinder. Cock your pistol, ensure your finger is off the trigger while maintaining your shooting arm in a 45 degrees safety angle with the barrel facing down range. **You may not** place a loaded gun on the shooting bench or raise your loaded pistol for any reason i.e. sighting your target and positioning your body.

### **3. Are you ready, fire**

**Shooters action:** Commence firing until you have completed your series, then unload and place your pistol on the shooting bench with the barrel down range, the chamber open and empty magazine against the pistol with the loading side up.

### **4. You may load 5 rounds for your next series**

**Shooter's action:** Load your magazine, chamber or cylinder. Cock your pistol, ensure your finger is off the trigger while maintaining your shooting arm in a 45 degrees safety angle with the barrel facing down range. **You may not** place a loaded gun on the shooting bench or raise your pistol for any reason i.e. sighting your target and positioning your body.

### **5. Cease fire and unload, Shooters step back from the line**

**Shooters actions:** Unload your pistols and magazines. Insert your clear chamber flag. Pistols are placed on the shooting bench with the barrel down range, the chamber open, clear chamber flag inserted and empty magazine against the pistol with the loading side up. (Revolvers with cylinders open). Shooters may remove eye and ear protection and must step back from the firing line.

**Range officers actions:** Check all weapons/magazines are empty and safe prior to proceeding.

### **6. The range is closed, you may wind back and patch**

**Shooter's actions:** Wind back targets to the firing line and score as required. Patch and return targets to the shooting position. **You may not** touch any weapons or magazines.

**Please note: All pistols need to be cleared by the range officer prior to the shooter returning them to their locked receptacle and removing them from the firing line.**

**Appendix 2**

**Adapted from the PNZ members handbook shooting tips for all disciplines**

**There are 5 key points to shooting an accurate shot every time you squeeze the trigger**

1. Address the target(s) in the best possible stance and body posture. (If need be, adjust your stance and posture so that you can close your eyes, raise the pistol, open your eyes and find that the sights align on your intended target without any further adjustments).
2. Grip the pistol firmly but not to the point of a tremble. (Use the recommended grip, stance and body posture recommended for the shot you are about to take, be it freestyle, strong or weak hand only shooting).
3. Acquire the correct sight picture. (Maintain and hold this sight picture while you apply gentle, steady pressure on the trigger until the shot breaks).

4. Prep the trigger - press the trigger straight back. (Too much finger on the trigger will result in pulling the shot. Too little finger on the trigger results in pushing the pistol off center).
5. Follow through and call the shot. (Keep watching the sights before, during and after you fire the shot)

### **In more detail:**

#### **1. Basic Shooting Tips**

Shooting, or the art of getting a good shot every time, can be broken down into the simple statement: Align the sights correctly, on the correct part of the target, and allow the shot to break without altering that alignment. Simple, but not necessarily easy! There are a number of basic techniques that go into making this alignment happen, and they are part of any kind of shooting. Your coach will be able to go through these with you, but as a guide, there is a summary below for pistol shooting.

#### **2. Stance**

Your stance has a lot to do with how well you shoot. Human beings are not actually well designed for pistol shooting, so we need to make an effort to produce a good stable shooting platform.

For shooting one handed in a standing position, a good stance to start with is with your feet about shoulder width apart, the toes turned slightly out, and with all of you turned at about 45° to a line coming directly at you from the target.

In general for one-handed shooting (ISSF and ML and sometimes in 'field' matches) your leading foot will be the same as the hand with which you are holding the pistol; ie right foot if you are right handed; left foot if you are left-handed.

You may need to adjust this to suit yourself (and your stance will probably need to change slightly over the course of a day). To do this, try this simple test: Set yourself up in the "starting" stance. Close your eyes. Lift your shooting arm (and gun if you can) toward the target. Open your eyes and check where you are pointing. Are you pointing at the centre of your target? The centre of someone else's?? If you need to change your stance, move the BACK foot around, by a very small amount, until your arm is pointed directly at the centreline. Then repeat the procedure. Keep doing the test until your arm comes smoothly up the centreline of the target!

It is a good idea to check your stance for each series you shoot.

For shooting two handed in 'field' matches there are two basic positions

In the "**Weaver Stance**" In the first the non-shooting foot is forward; the shooting arm is straight out and braced by the bent non shooting arm.

In the "**Isosceles Stance**", you stand with feet apart, on a line parallel with the targets, both arms in a similar position, bracing each other. The main purpose of either is to make sure you have a steady platform for the pistol.

#### **3. Grip**

A good consistent grip is essential to firing accurate shots. Your grip will determine how the sights are presented to your eye and how good your sight alignment will be, which along with good stance, allows you to get that part of the statement above sorted out.

Holding the gun by the barrel in your non-shooting hand, fit the gun into the web of your shooting hand. Wrap your fingers around the grip and allow your trigger finger to sit in the trigger guard. Your thumb should be relaxed, either just touching the grip, or sitting slightly away from it. Your fingertips should be loose - if the tips of your fingers are white - you are holding the gun too tightly!!



You should hold onto the pistol firmly and evenly, with the pressure being applied between the web of the hand/base of the thumb area, and the joints of the second and third fingers. This is called a “fore and aft” grip.

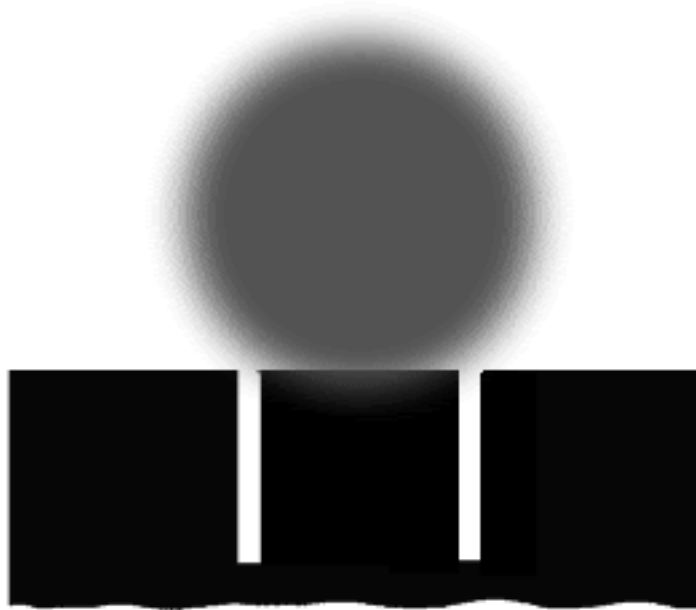
To test your grip; take up your normal stance, fit the gun into your hand, lower your arm to the 45° degree position, and then raise the gun up to the target. You should see the front sight neatly bracketed by the rear sight. If the front sight is to the right or left of where it should be, adjust the gun in your grip, using your non-shooting hand, and do the test again. Keep doing this until you get a consistent sight alignment (see below).

For a two handed hold; punch the shooting hand into the other hand and check your sight position as above. If the front sight is too high or too low, you will need to adjust the angle of your wrist!

#### **4. Sight Alignment**

For almost all pistols you will ever come across, the front and rear sights should be aligned so that the sight blades are all level across the top and the front sight is bracketed by the rear sight with equal amounts of light on either side.

This will make sure that your shots are centred in your aiming area.



Proper sight alignment: Control alignment is precise. Focus limited to front sight only, renders the sights distinct and target indistinct and sight relationship can be controlled constantly.

#### **5. Sight Picture**

This includes “what you see” when you are looking at the sights and the target. As you can only focus on one thing at a time, the front sight should be where you concentrate. You cannot see the rear sight, the front sight and the target all clearly at one time — the human eye is not capable of it!

The front sight is the most important feature of your sight picture, and therefore it should appear most clear in your vision — try to see the grain in the metal! The white bits between the rear sight and the front sight blades (what isn’t there!) are also important.

The target is least important of all — your stance should make sure that you are “on target”. However, you need to make sure that you are aiming at the right part of the target. It is recommended that you use an area (rather than a point) to aim at, and that this area should

be centred about half way between the bottom of the black area on the target, and the bottom of the target. (If your sights are too close to the black area of the target [this is commonly called “six o’clock hold”], an optical illusion may make it difficult to see the sights clearly.) As it is physically impossible for any person to hold a pistol absolutely still, you must accept that there will be some movement. (Don’t try to concentrate on a point, let the sights move within the area of aim.) The target and the rear sight should both be in your peripheral vision, and thus be rather fuzzy.

Note that nearly all people have one eye stronger than the other. This is called the master eye and it governs the alignment of objects with your eyes. For most purposes it doesn’t matter which it is, and most people don’t know which their master eye is. As soon as you do directional things with your eyes, like shooting, it is important. Most people find that they need to use their master eye to shoot with, even if it means using the eye opposite to the strong hand.

A simple test will determine which eye is which for you. To check this - look at a point in the medium distance eg a spot on the wall, and holding a finger at arm’s length line up the finger with the point with both eyes open. Now close each eye alternately. You will find that with one eye open the finger and the point will still line up, and with the other open the point will “move” in relation to the finger. The eye for which the point does not move is your master eye.

If you are right-handed and left-eyed, as quite a few people are, you should use your left eye for sighting with (unless you shoot with both eyes open), but still hold the pistol with your right hand. Vice versa if you are right-eyed and left-handed of course! This is definitely better than forcing yourself to use the wrong hand or the wrong eye. You may find that the master eye is the one which you can keep open on its own anyway. An alternative is to keep both eyes open but “blank out” the non-master by applying patches (or “invisible” adhesive tape) to the shooting glasses.

## **6. Trigger Control**

The next basic technique to master is control of the trigger. This is one of the major factors in whether you are able to “allow the shot to break” without messing up the perfectly good alignment that you have worked so hard to develop!

There are two parts to this:

- You need to have the right part of your finger on the trigger
- You need to be able to move the trigger straight back into the area of support (in your grip!)

In order to test whether your finger is on the right part of the trigger, take up your grip, hold the pistol out in your normal shooting position, watch your sights and carefully bring your finger back until it just touches the trigger surface. If the front sight moves one way or the other, your finger isn’t in the right place. If the front sight stays put, everything is great! This is where things differ for left and right-handers.

For right handed people - if the front sight moves to the left, you do not have enough finger on the trigger. Move your finger through the trigger guard a bit, and try again! If the front sight moves to the right, you have too much finger on the trigger, and need to pull your finger back a bit.

For left handed people, it is exactly the opposite. If the sight moves to the left, you have too much finger on the trigger. If it moves right, then you need to put your finger a bit farther into the trigger guard.

Remember to control your trigger after each shot, too. When you are practising, or shooting individual precision shots, keep the pressure on the trigger even after the shot has gone and as you “follow through” (see below). As you lower your arm to 45°, release the trigger. Don’t take your finger completely off the trigger though - otherwise you will lose the position that you have just carefully set up!

## **7. Breathing**

Breath control is also important. Your breathing basically moves all the bones and muscles in the top half of your body each time you breathe. This does not make it any easier to hold the sight picture or control your trigger. The recommended way of dealing with breathing is to continue breathing normally as you prepare for the shot (like doing all the “tests” outlined above). As you lift your arm to take aim, breathe in (in your usual way). When your arm is pointing at the target, let out a small amount of air, then hold your breath until the shot is fired!

### **8. Follow through**

Once you have fired the shot, let the pistol settle back into your grip from its recoil position. If your grip is steady, the position of the sights in the follow through will give you a pretty good idea of where the sights were when you triggered the shot. Look at the sights and see where they are! Then lower your arm and release the pressure on the trigger! Be prepared to realign the sights for the next shot if they are not pretty well on the target. Please note: There are really excellent reasons (generally from human physiology or from physics) for all of the above. If you want to know more, or to discuss other ideas, talk to your coach.

### **9. Additional Tips**

Like any other sport, the skills that you need to be a good shot, in whatever discipline, must be learnt thoroughly and then practised. The amount of practice that you need to do depends on your ultimate goal. If you wish to shoot for relaxation, then your only practice may be your trips to the range. If, however, you decide that you wish to be a serious competitor, then your practice commitment will reflect this, not only in your time at the range, but through "dry firing" at home or even working out at home or the gym.

Shooting is rather unusual in that, unless you have a physical limitation, the level that you achieve is limited only by your drive to succeed. If you set a goal to shoot at the Olympics - you can! - as long as you are prepared to put in the time. The only thing that can hold you back is your own willingness to put in the effort required.

- Keep a notebook, and note down anything that you have learned during your coaching or practice sessions, any questions that you want to ask, and a record of how your shooting is progressing. At first, you might only want to note down the size of each 5-shot group and the group's position on the target.
- Every month or so, shoot a group of 20 shots, without checking the target. When you have fired all of the shots, check the target. Ignore the 3 shots that are farthest from the centre of the group. Check the group of the other 17 shots, and take a note of it in your shooting notebook. This is your “current” group.
- Now and then, set yourself up in your stance, the gun up onto the correct area of the target, and then close your eyes. Count to 20, and then open your eyes again. Where is the gun pointing? How are the sight/s aligned?
- Hint: It helps to “visualise” what you expect to see when you open your eyes again!
- Don't be surprised if your group size or your score sometimes slips back a bit. It is quite normal for new shooters to increase their ability for a while, then for things to go backwards, then start getting better again. At first, there is so much to learn that concentration on one thing may disturb your concentration on other things - causing shots to go astray. Once you get used to what you are doing, things will come back into line.
- Any time that you “plateau” - that is when you don't appear to be getting better - go back to concentrating on “The Basics”...Chances are that you have skipped something.
- Celebrate your successes!! As a generalisation, we don't really allow ourselves to take credit for something we have done well. About the most we will ever admit to is “That wasn't too bad...”. Well, now is the time to give yourself a break. If you shoot well, tell yourself “That was great!”. Enjoy the feeling when it goes just right - then remember what it felt like to shoot the shot, and do it again!

## 10. DEFINITIONS

Like any other sport, we use a fair amount of jargon. Some of the more basic terms are defined below. If you hear any other words or phrases that you are not precisely sure of, please ask a Club member to explain.

**Muzzle:** The business end of any firearm (the end of the barrel from which the bullet exits)

**Front sight:** The sight element above the muzzle.

**Rear Sight:** The sight element nearest your hand (and eye).

**Cartridge:** A loaded "round" of ammunition.

**Projectile/Bullet:** The bit that flies to the target.

**Ready position:** The position from which all timed events must start. This varies according to which discipline or match you are shooting.

**Gauge:** A device to assist in assessing the value of a shot hole.

**Skid:** An oblong hole in a target caused by the bullet hitting it at an angle. In most matches, there is a maximum width allowed for this before it is scored as a miss.

**Malfunction:** When the pistol does not fire after one pull of the trigger.

**Re-shoot:** This is allowed after a malfunction in ISSF matches.

**ISSF:** International Shooting Sport Federation